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ECHO OF ARUBA

AN ECONOMIC MONTHLY

Vol. II No. 9, November 1960

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Publisher's Page

BY MORRIS SERPHOS JR.

During the past month the Aruba Trade and Industry Association experienced a very welcome and necessary improvement by the closer ties that are being drawn between the ATIA and its sister-organisation in Curaçao, the Curaçao Trade and Industry Association. On the invitation of the CTIA a delegation visited Curaçao and was warmly received by Mr. Charles B. Debrot, president, Mrs. M. D. Monte-Boskaljon, Secretary and Mr. Arturo J. Jesurun, Boardmember. The Aruba delegation consisted of Mr. Arturo M. Arends, President, Mr. C. W. J. J. Heufke, Secretary and Mr. S. L. Berlinski, Boardmember. It is expected that as of from now the two organisations will consult each other frequently on common problems and exchange of more visits has been planned.

The 1961 Budget of the Aruba Island Government has been presented on October 1 to the members of the Island Council. It is very well presented and documented and we wish to quote some information to give our readers some insight in Aruba's finances. The total of the budget amounts to Fl. 24 million (about \$ 13 million), of which Education alone amounts to about 25%. Compared with 1954 need of funds for schools and teachers has increased by Fl. 3,2 million, bringing the total to Fl. 6,5 million, which is an increase 97,3%. The budget has been balanced as usual. Some declarations made by Mr. O. S. Henriquez, of the Island Government, are of high interest. *He stated that the policy of the island government is not to raise any taxes higher than their present level, nor to create any new taxes in the future.* The financial problems are great however due in particular to the ever increasing

needs of education as demonstrated above. The Island Government intends again to increase income by a broadening of the basis of the island economy, such as attraction of new industry, further promotion of tourism, etc. In this connection results are expected shortly. The expenditures increase annually with about 5% without further extension of the activities of the Government, due to regular salary increases, promotions and children allowances.

It appears to be necessary to develop a long term plan for the financing of future educational projects. We have great appreciation for the labors of the Island Government although we would still like to hear more about plans to curtail expenditures and we suggest the items salaries, overseas furloughs and other benefits that are no longer compatible with our present financial predicament. On the other hand a sign of things to come has been demonstrated by the fact that personnel of all Aruba Government offices will practically not be increased. The labor situation is expected to improve considerably by the possible exploitation of the fosfate fields and the construction of new factories. We have to assume that our Island Government has great hopes with regard to investment by our European Kingdom partner in the economy of Aruba, as appears to be under consideration both here and in the Hague. The problems of a budgetary nature as underlined by this Budget once more demonstrates the overall financial situation in which our country presently is involved. We express hope, that our Antillian Government entertains the same principles in the field of taxation as our Island Government does.

Pagina de los Publicadores

POR MORRIS SERPHOS HIJO

La Asociación de Comercio e Industria Arubana, el mes pasado dió a conocer un adelanto muy grato y necesario. Nuestra Asociación y la organización hermana de Curaçao, la Asociación de Comercio e Industria Curazoleña, mantuvieron una conferencia con el fin de coordinar el trabajo y estrechar las relaciones entre ambas organizaciones. Invitada por la CTIA una delegación visitó Curaçao y fué cordialmente recibida por el señor Charles B. Debrot, Presidente, la señora M. D. Monte-Boskaljon, secretaria, y señor Arturo J.

Jesurun, miembro de la Junta. La ATIA fué representada por los señores Arturo M. Arends, Presidente, C. W. J. J. Heufke, secretario, y S. L. Berlinski, miembro de la Junta. Esperamos que en el futuro las dos organizaciones intercambien ideas sobre problemas comunes. El presupuesto del año 1961 del Gobierno de la Isla de Aruba fué introducido el primero de octubre a los miembros del Consejo de la isla. Está muy bien hecho y documentado y mucho nos complace poder dar algunas informaciones a nuestros lectores para que

tengan una percepción de las finanzas arubanas. El total del presupuesto sube a 24 millones de florines, son mas o menos 13 millones de dólares, de los cuales sólo para la Educación se necesita mas de 25 por ciento. En comparación con 1954 las necesidades para el departamento de Educación han aumentado 97,3% o en cifras, de 3,2 millones a 6,5 millones de florines. El presupuesto fué equilibrado, como de costumbre. Algunas declaraciones del señor O. S. Henriquez del Gobierno de la isla son muy interesantes. El declaró que la política del Gobierno de la isla es de no aumentar los impuestos existentes ni crear nuevos impuestos. Sin embargo los problemas financieros son muy opresivos debido a las necesidades del Departamento de Educación que siguen creciendo. El Gobierno de la isla quiere aumentar los egresos ensanchando las bases de la economía de la isla, tales como la fundación de nuevas industrias, la promoción del turismo etc. Con respecto a esto, pronto se espera resultados. Aunque el Gobierno no expanda sus actividades, los egresos siguen

aumentando con un 5 por ciento anual, debido a los aumentos regulares en salarios, ascensos y suplementos para niños. Parece que es necesario que produzcan en el futuro un proyecto a término largo para suministrar fondos para planos de enseñanza. Apreciamos mucho la obra que el Gobierno arubano realizó, pero mucho nos gustaría ver que los gastos sean reducidos y sugerimos los asientos salarios, abonos de los gastos de viaje y residencia y otros privilegios, que no son mas compatibles con el predicamiento financiero. Pero la promesa de que no admitirán más oficiales en el servicio gubernatal es satisfactoria. La explotación esperada de las minas de fosfato y la construcción de nuevas fábricas aliviará la situación del mercado del labor. Al otro lado el Gobierno abraza la esperanza que el Reino europeo haga inversiones en la economía de la isla arubana. Y, refiriéndonos a la promesa que los impuestos no serán aumentados, de nuestra parte esperamos que el Gobierno antillano mantenga los mismos sentimientos que el Gobierno de la isla.

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Rondom de begroting 1961 Eiland Aruba

De Gewone Dienst van de Begroting 1961 vertoont an Uitgaven een bedrag van 24,2 miljoen en aan Ontvangsten 22,5 miljoen. Derhalve is er een tekort van 1,7 miljoen, waarvoor nog nadere dekking gezocht moet worden.

De Kapitaaldienst heeft een nadelig saldo van 5,1 miljoen en de Reserve-, Kas en Verrekendient een voordelig saldo van 0,4 miljoen. De Memorie van Toelichting tot de Begroting zit uitstekend in elkaar en laat zich prettig lezen. Ook het quarto formaat is aangenaam. We staan hier even bij stil omdat men toch altijd een zekere tegenzin moet overwinnen, als men een begroting ter hand neemt. De opzet en uitvoering verraaft dat het Eilandbestuur van Aruba publicity-minded is, of althans blijkbaar de mening koestert, dat de begroting alle burgers aangaat en het dientengevolge niet nodig vindt om de belangstellenden en belanghebbenden van te voren af te stoten. De begroting bestaat uit een vijftal delen, alle gestencil. Naar het schijnt is het tikwerk door de afdelingen zelf verricht, waarvoor hulde.

De Memorie bevat vele interessante opmerkingen. Het watervoorzieningsbedrijf gaat relatief goed. Gezien de waterrekeningen, die we ontvangen, verbaast ons dit niets. Overigens steken ze nog gunstig af bij de electriciteitsrekeningen. Het tekort bij de watervoorzieningsdienst is tot op de helft verminderd, namelijk van 600,0 op 300,0 (in zduizenden). Er bestaat de wens tot toevoeging van een zoutwinningsbedrijf, met als produkten caustic soda en chloor. Het geld hiervoor zou uit Nederland moeten komen. De mogelijkheid tot vestiging van 3 (drie) chemische fabrieken, is niet uitgesloten. In dit verband zou het water- en electriciteitsbedrijf moeten worden uitgebreid en moet er een industriehaven te Barcadera komen.

Zoals men ziet, activiteit genoeg bij het waterbedrijf. Het ziet er naar uit dat dit bedrijf de nucleus wordt van een chemische industrie, welke een brok nieuwe welvaart gaat toevoegen. Al hebben we dan ook altijd de pessimistische gedachte op de achtergrond, dat produceren gemakkelijker is dan verkopen, toch doet dit aan de scheppingskracht van deze nieuwe ideeën niets af. Prompt hebben we dus de salarieëring opgezocht en vergeleken met andere, mindere productieve afdelingen en met veel minder personeel (bij de watervoorziening ongeveer 140, als we ons goed herinneren, en voor een groot gedeelte geschoold). Die vergelijking viel naar onze, uiteraard subjectieve, smaak in het nadeel van het watervoorzieningsbedrijf uit. Mogelijkerwijs zal men dat een vreemd geluid vinden, vooral komende van de zijde van de Echo. Men dient dan evenwel te bedenken dat de Echo het orgaan is van de zakenlieden van Aruba, die er niets op tegen hebben om

het volle pond te betalen voor wat zij beschouwen als te zijn volle, produktieve diensten.

Nu we toch op dit onderwerp zijn gekomen, moeten we het hebben over de Werkverschaffing. Deze staat op de begroting voor 1 miljoen en geeft werk aan 400 man. Vier maal per dag zien we een klein resultaat van dit werk en eens per week, 's zondags, als we een ritje gaan maken, iets meer. Toen we jaren geleden Aruba voor het eerst zagen, was onze eerste indruk: dit mooie eiland wordt bedolven onder tonnen glas van gebroken flessen. Dat is nu, dank zij de werkverschaffing, op het traject, dat we dagelijks zien, verdwenen, wat een zeer belangrijke verbetering is. Ons eiland wordt belangrijk schöner en daardoor, aantrekkelijker. Het ware te wensen, dat we het zo konden houden. Zou een radiopropaganda helpen? Slagzin: Schoot en Schuit zeggen, houdt het schip van Aruba schoon". Daarom smeken en dreigen met straffen, geeft natuurlijk niets. Maar beroep doen op sentido comun en desnoods de vanden belachelijk maken, dat is weer iets anders. Bovendien duperen zij geweldig de mensen, die, naar wij hopen, bij wijze van overbrugging, in de werkverschaffing werken. Want begrijpelijkerwijs kan men voor opruimingswerkzaamheden niet zoveel betalen. Als zij daaraan minder tijd zouden moeten besteden en meer voor werkzaamheden van infrastructurale aard, dan zou hun beloning hoger kunnen zijn dan het nu geldende gemiddelde van minder dan f. 40,- per man per week (in de gloeiende zon). Er gaat namelijk één zesde af van die 1 miljoen voor trucks en materialen.

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fing is nog eens iets anders dan een paar vers afgestudeerde studenten van de Ambachtsschool meenden te moeten aannemen, naar men ons vertelde. Volgens zegsman zouden een paar afgestudeerden een betrekking van f. 150.— per maand afgewezen hebben, als zijnde beneden nu waardig. Ze gaven de voorkeur aan het niets doen. Nu ja, dat gaat wel over. Een begrijpelijke menselijke zwakheid dat men nog even terugdeinst voordat men het bedrijfsleven intreedt, want men voorvoelt dat men voorgoed afstand doet van tot nu toe genoten privilegeën. Maar als de economische toestand eens niet in mineur verkeerde, als er volop bedrijvigheid was, als men begonnen was met de bouw van de drie nieuwe fabrieken, met de nieuwe industriehavens, dan zouden diezelfde jongelui heel anders denken. Dan zouden ze elkaar verdringen om direct aan de slag te gaan. En als de overheid nu één taak heeft op het economisch terrein, dan is het wel, het aansporen en het aanvuren.

Psychologisch is dit van zo'n groot belang. De overheid moet er de moed inhouden. Er is alle reden toe. De Memorie is veel te pessimistisch. Drie nieuwe fabrieken, fosfaatontginning, industriehavens te Barcadera, verbeterde vaargeul haven Oranjestad, nieuwe havenfaciliteiten, luchthaven voor jetvliegtuigen, dat zijn toch wel redenen tot vreugdeklanken. De eilandelijke voorlichtingsdienst is ook niet bepaald een trompet met jubeltonen. Inplaats van een produktief propaganda-apparaat, dat activerend kan werken in binnen- en buitenland, krijgen wij allerlei berichten over mensen, die komen en gaan, met voorzichtige formuleringen en accentverleggingen, terwille van imaginaire heilige huisjes. Waarmede we niet willen zeggen dat deze dienst niet in goede handen zou zijn, want daar is de deskundige mening van Julius Caesar om ons tegen te spreken. We willen alleen maar opmerken dat dit apparaat veel produktiever gebruikt kan worden dan met het in de watten te leggen van allerlei VIP'S en half-VIP's.

Nu ontkomen we er verder niet aan. Het Onderwijs. De spelbederver van de Memorie. De kosten van Onderwijs zijn sinds 1954 verdubbeld en staan nu op 6,5 miljoen voor de Gewone Dienst 1961. De Kapitaaldienst heeft dan nog bijna 0,7 miljoen. De Memorie zegt rondout dat het eiland deze hoge kosten niet meer kan dragen en dat het Land moet bijspringen. Zeer terecht.

Verder is er iets dat wij niet begrijpen. Onder de ontvangsten missen wij namelijk die 15 opensten. Intertijd werd het betalen van schoolgeld afgeschafte en inplaats daarvan moest iedereen 15 opensten Inkomstenbelasting betalen.

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ORANJESTAD - ARUBA - NETH. ANT.

is noodzakelijk en niemand zal het nut daarvan betwijfelen. Iets anders is dat het gebruik van Papiamentu de kosten opdrijven. Voor de Antillianen is dit de moedertaal en daarom dierbaar en onaantastbaar. Een onmiskenbaar feit blijft het niettemin dat deze uitzonderlijke taal met zeer klein taalgebied en korte geschiedenis, een schot vormt tussen de Antillen en het cultuurbezit van andere volkeren en andere tijden. De taal achten we dus de oorzaak van het doubleren van klassen en van het feit dat mannen met snorren op de Ulo-school lopen. Een ongezonde toestand, des te meer te betreuren omdat het gemiddelde intelligentie-peil zeker niet lager is dan elders.

Het grote aantal kinderen is de andere oorzaak. Het wil nog wel eens voorkomen dat de Regering klaagt over de bevolkingsaanwas. De Regeringsleden zullen dan vanzelfsprekend het oog hebben op de kinderen van anderen, niet op die van zichzelf. Dit is een punt. Een ander punt is, dat voor industrialisatie (en mechanisatie) bevolkingstoe was noodzakelijk is. Nederland heeft nu 11,5 miljoen mensen en moet Italianen importeren. Dat voor mechanisatie meer mensen nodig zijn, zal

velen vreemd in de oren klinken, en wel hoofdzakelijk omdat de fabrikanten van machines zo hardnekkig het tegendeel beweren. Als die bewering evenwel waar zou zijn, dan behoefde nu niemand meer te werken en we hebben integendeel onze handen vol met het vullen van de hongerige monden van de machines. Verder brengt de speelse menselijke geest met zich mede, dat we vroeger met de hand alleen het hoogst nodige deden en nu met de machine, het hoogst onnodige. Het is wel vreemd, dat onze economen bij hun abstracties, een belangrijke drijfveer, welke is spel en sport, buiten beschouwing laten.

En tenslotte stellen wij U nog de vraag, of U bij het lezen van de Begroting (U moet dat beslist doen) niet gemerkt heeft dat Kindertoeslagen worden gegeven. Natuurlijk volkomen terecht in een moderne maatschappij en wij juichen het zonder restricties toe, maar toch werkt dat de bevolkingstoe was in de hand. Misschien zoudt U het wel willen weten, maar we kunnen toch echt niet zeggen, bij welk punt de wet van de afnemende meeropbrengst begint te werken.

C. B.

Dateline Manhattan

Max Tak:

Musical cooperation requested

It sounds a little bit exaggerated but NBC, the National Broadcasting Company, is a neighbor of mine. I am located in one of the offices of 10 Rockefeller Plaza; NBC's New York headquarters are located at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, the building which, with its 76 floors, dominates the Plaza. NBC is, as everybody knows, one of the two rulers in the American empire of radio and television. CBS is the other one. I like to be at the NBC-studios. Also because I have some friends there. Sometimes I need NBC badly. A recent example: One of NBC's top stars, a man of world reputation, does not want to admit reporters to his rehearsals. (I think he is completely right). One of my very dear friends came recently to New York City and wanted to attend a rehearsal of the star. One call to NBC-TV smuggled my friend into the studio. He considered it as quite an experience.

From the hundreds of offices the NBC needs, there is one which I like very much — the so-called Record Room on the 2nd floor. This space contains tens of thousands of records. Thanks to an ingenious system any record in this room is within ten seconds available.

There are two officials who watch this precious collection. One is an American gentleman who knows everybody and everything in the American music busi-

ness. (And it is in certain respect a business.....)

The other official is a Frenchman, a musician. I like very much to meet him. I love to speak French, which is my second language, and my NBC-Frenchman knows everything about musical life in the Netherlands expertly. If this publication was devoted to music, I would give some remarkable examples of this man's knowledge of everything Dutch.

In the Record Room, the disco-programs are put together. When I happened to be there recently they handled a request of the broadcaster who is in charge

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of the excellent after midnight radio program. The broadcaster wanted as much music as available inspired by geographical names. There are not many titles in this field. There are some. The first one which became a world success was VALENCIA by Padilla, who also composed (after that) PARIS.

Another song with a tremendous appeal is named after the capital of Denmark, COPENHAGEN. It was sung by Danny Kaye in the Sam Goldwyn-picture inspired by the magnificent personality of the wizard of Danish fairy tales, Hans Christian Andersen.

While my friends in the Record Room gathered the recorded records, an idea came to me of which the materialization does not involve any expenditure of money.

I think it would be recommendable that Antillian lyricists and composers join to write a song, titled ARUBA!

When all available talent has written a number of songs, then they ought to be submitted to the judgment of a jury, of which the members are sensitive to pop music and also publicity value. Perhaps the scope of this jury could be widened by adding some laymen who represent the laymen of everywhere.

There are excellent Antillian recording studios which know their job. Let Antillian musicians play the submitted Aruba songs. Some of the best results have to be transmitted to an American or European record company. If there are possibilities in one of these songs, they will be discovered. Do not send music to publishers. This is useless, because nowadays only mu-

sic which has a record success status has a chance to be published. The interested reader has to be reminded of the fact that Tin Pan Alley, the Manhattan jazz and pop music center, only publishes one, I repeat: ONE of the FIFTEEN HUNDRED songs which are presented to publishers for publication. I definitely do not like the 1:1500 chance.....

And when the ARUBA-song will be generally applauded, when it comes in the air... then it will remain there. This kind of song, as everybody connected with pop music knows, does not die the early death of 99% of virtually all songs. With, of course, the George Gershwin-, Irving Berlin-, Cole Porter-, Vincent Youmans-exceptions. Songs with a geographical identification have a long life. I state this with some modesty because I happen to be the composer who wrote in collaboration with my dear friend Alex de Haas, a quarter of a century ago, the AMSTERDAM-song which is known in all parts of the world where Dutchmen and other people who love Amsterdam, are living.

Max Tak.

EDITORS COMMENT

Those happy carefree days when the song "Amsterdam" was young, when everyone went to Tuschinski, regardless of the picture, just to hear Max Tak. Thank you for reminding. We give you a suggestion in return. There is a song "Aruba". Not forceful enough, unfortunately. Please contact Padu Lampe. Max Tak and Padu Lampe are bound to brew a mighty potion.

MONTE MADURO

The sudden death, through a second and fatal heart attack, of Mr. Montefiore Maduro came as a great shock to Aruba.

He was Boardmember of the Aruba Trade and Industry Association, member of the Board of Trustees of the "Echo of Aruba". He founded the Echo of Aruba and was the first editor. He was member of many associations, always ready to help. Only a short while ago he ran from door to door in order to help the Y.M.C.A. He was well loved, being kindhearted and generous. When asked for help, he gave that help unconditionally. When asked for advice, he gave his advice honestly, impartially.

Small wonder that we all consider his decease as a great loss to Aruba, especially severe to his Company, Wimco, to the Aruba Trade and Industry Association and to the foundation "Echo of Aruba".

Driven by a feeling of deep sadness, some say: Monte was too young to die. He could not stop working, he should have taken it easier. But they know that he could not help himself, that it was in his nature. They know that they would not have liked him as

much if he would not have been conscientious, hard-working, honest and generous.

We all know that it was unavoidable. It was so ordained. Something had to give and it was a kind and generous heart that submitted to the strain.

During the funeral the shops in Aruba were closed and many were the friends who attended the age-old, simple and dignified burial service, conducted by Mr. Wisniewicz, at the Jewish cemetery, almost too small to contain Monte's friends at Aruba and those, who had come from Curacao and elsewhere.

We were all deeply impressed and deeply saddened by this sudden tragedy, by the irreparability of this loss. Our thoughts were with Mr. Monte Maduro, but foremost with his family, Mrs. Monte Maduro and five young children. How awkward, how futile we felt in the expression of our sympathy. But how else could we honor a capable, hard-working man, whom we liked and respected, otherwise then by our mute:

May you rest in peace, Monte.

Venezuelan Iron Politics

In "La Esfera", a wellknown Caracas newspaper, we encountered the following statement, made by Dr. Juan Pablo Alfonzo, Minister of Mines, and that appeared in the issue of Friday, October 7, 1960.

This statement is extremely important. In relatively few words it gives a comprehensive synopsis of Venezuelan politics with regards to iron, oil and other minerals, reason why we believe that the statement is of interest to our readers. We were lucky to find a full translation in the Daily Journal of October 8 as follows:

Venezuela is an essentially mining country because of its oil and iron deposits, as well as many other minerals which have not yet been explored properly. Fortunately for the country, all the minerals under the surface are the common property of the Venezuelan people who have absolute rights over them. The concessions for the exploitation of hydrocarbons or minerals only give limited rights which are in all cases supervised constantly by the state.

Because of these principles, no matter what ill effects might develop because of abuses and improper use of our mineral wealth, we must not be so incautious as to neglect the technical or legal formal matters which should be followed in the administration of such common property wealth.

It must be made clear that the true cause of any past abuses was the irresponsibility of those who have governed by force, disregarding the national sovereignty which comes from the people. Thus it can be proved that during the past democratic governments such as those of Presidents Betancourt and Gallegos (1945-1948) and now again that of President Betancourt have defended firmly and efficiently the national interests. The government's attitude towards the defense of hydrocarbons and minerals is intransigent and constant a fact which is well known by all.

1. As far as oil is concerned, when the concessions granted before the 1943 law were increased by many more million hectares in accord with that particular law, the democratic government stated and maintained in 1946 for the first time, the principle of not granting any more oil concessions. Such a principle created at that time much confusion among extremists, but at present there is no one who challenges the necessity and convenience of not granting more oil concessions. On the matter of participation taxes, it is common knowledge, here and abroad, that Venezuela took the initiative in obtaining a fair share of the profits according to the circumstances which prevailed at that time.

2. The government was no less careful in its nationalistic defense of the iron ore. The official position is so clear that only those who are obsessed by foreign-inspired ideas which pretend to make Venezuela

an unwilling contender in international fights, can hope to confuse Venezuelans in this matter.

Only those who are in the habit of misrepresenting the truth for specific reasons or who fail to check the facts, could possibly have confused the iron concessions obtained by some mining enterprise through a law passed by the government of General Medina and those who collaborated with his government. Among the latter, there are many who still state that the mines presently being exploited by the Orinoco Mining Company, one of them being Cerro Bolivar, were granted by the democratic government. These concessions were claimed in accord with the law passed on July 15, 1944 and with the regulations authorized on December 28 of the same year, which are still in effect. The area of these mines had not yet been declared a national reserve, and once a claim is made by any person the law gives that person a right which cannot be invalidated except in the cases specified by the same law.

3. The only iron ore concessions granted by the democratic government in 1946 were those of Piacca on the Orinoco Area west of Caroni. These concessions of low iron content ore could only be exploited by special processes concerning which the nation wanted to know if they were feasible. Besides, at that time, the only concessions being exploited were those of El Pao which have limited reserves, and the national interest required the determination in the shortest possible time of all other possibilities of the iron ore reserves which could be processed in this country.

The fact that the granting of these concessions was of benefit to Venezuela was proven during the discussions of the Annual Ministry of Development Report (including Mines at the time) in the freely elected National Congress, when representatives of all political parties other than AD attacked the government's policies as much as they could without once referring to the concessions which were reported granted.

The importance, at that time, of having accomplished the economical exploitation of the low grade Piacca mineral, is proven by the recent abandonment of the concessions by a company which held it 14 years under its control. This abandonment of the Piacca mines ends the incident of the only iron ore concessions granted by the democratic government of 1946. The surrendering of the concession is also the consequence of present policies which dictate a strict vigilance of the concessions in force, in order that they not be kept improperly by the concessionaires as future reserves. If these concessions had not been surrendered, they would have returned to the nation next December anyway, since that was the final date of an extension of contract granted to the concessionaire.

4. But the present policies on iron, in accord with new circumstances and the interests of the nation

after the discovery of the great Western Caroni reserves, are similar to those of oil, since we are no longer interested in having private enterprise explore or exploit the iron ore. The "no more concessions" policy applies now to iron ore also, but we go farther than that. The present policies now dictate a strict watch over those concessions which are still in effect and make sure that those which do not comply strictly with the provisions of the law are recovered from those concessionaires who have neglected their rights.

That is the reason why the government voided the concession contracts of the Maria Luisa mines which have reserves estimated at 150 million tons. These concessions were controlled by the Hanna Ore Co. and Republic Steel Corp.

The cause of the voiding of the contracts was the fact that the concessionaires had not begun exploitation of the mines within the time limit specified by law. The parties affected by the measure have begun a suit against the government which has little chance of success.

5. But the iron policy and the decision to exploit and process the mineral in Venezuela extends to other minerals such as nickel and manganese which are vital to steel production. Therefore no more concessions will be granted for the exploitation of these minerals and the existent one will be carefully supervised the same as the iron concessions. Here again, the government has voided the concession contracts of the Camedass and San Onofre mines, that were held by International Nickel Corp, which was carrying out a fictitious exploitation in order to retain the rights over the mines.

In this case also, the parties concerned have announced that they will defend their rights before the courts, but here again we are confident that justice will be on the side of the nation.

A similar case is that of the manganese mines of Sakuntala, Urania and others in the Piar District of Bolivar state, which have also been reclaimed by the nation.

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6. Bauxite is another mineral which is affected by the "no concession" policy. In this case, the reason is not the proven reserves, but the fact that there exists a great hydroelectric potential which will be developed by this country. Because of this economic factor, the State reserves for itself the right to exploit its bauxite, since it is not considered convenient to grant concessions to private enterprise.

7. Finally, because of its close relation with the hydroelectric potential, a national reserve, and with the hydrocarbon potential, also a national reserve, the government will not grant concessions for the exploitation of the geothermal potential which has been discovered and proven in the area of El Pilar in Sucre State. In this case there is also pending an appeal of a company which claims to have concessionaire rights over the energy discovered.

HARMEN P. ODUBER

While we gathered to bring Mr. Monte Maduro to his last rest, the news of the death of Mr. Harmen P. Oduber was brought to our company. Our business community suffered a second serious blow.

Manichi Oduber, as he was called affectionately, was the first optician in Aruba. Mr. Oduber was co-founder of the well-known firm Oduber-Kan, jewellers and opticians. He was member of the Chamber of Commerce for the wholesale trade. The first heart attack he suffered, obliged him to give up his seat on the Board of Advice to the Government of the Netherlands Antilles. This adversity did nothing to dim the kind and cheerful wisdom that brightened

the lives of those near to him. It was a pleasant place to be in, that quiet room where Mr. Oduber had his workshop, where he tested the eyes of his customers and gave his prescriptions. This room was filled with realistic compassion, with a whole life devoted to duty, so that there was no room for the easy cynicism of nowadays.

This oasis of real values is empty now, so is the honored and deserved place that Mr. Oduber occupied in the Aruban community. But the memory of Manichi Oduber as a kind and wise gentleman will not die, as long as one of those, who knew him, lives.

Venezuela Tries To Raise Prices

According to the Daily Journal, the Caracas newspaper edited in the English language, Mr. George Shea wrote in The Wall Street Journal, under above-mentioned heading as follows:

For anyone whose adult life has spanned more years than one generation there is a depressingly familiar and ancient echo to some of the news. Such is the case with a plan being actively promoted by several oil producing nations to keep up the price of petroleum in world markets.

An Associated Press dispatch last week quoted Juan Perez Alfonzo, Venezuela's Minister of Mining and Oil, on his way back through London from a meeting in Baghdad, as saying five oil producing nations, including his own have agreed to hold down production and push up prices. The other four nations are all Middle Eastern — Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait — and what links all five is that their economic lives depend on oil exports.

They are among the biggest producers of petroleum in the world, but unlike the United States they cannot use more than a negligible fraction of the output themselves. Their sales of oil to industrial nations, principally in Europe, provide an over-shadowing part of their economic revenues from abroad.

For that reason recent price reductions for crude oil sold in international markets have dismayed them, and they say they're going to do something about it. They're going to set up some sort of plan whereby each of them will offer only its "fair share" in the world market, and by doing this they're going to push the price back up to its former level before they meet again in January, this time in Caracas.

He said they're going to try to prevent the oil companies, that drilled the wells and found the oil and now ship it out from playing off one oil producing country against another. The companies work this trick, he suggested, by offering to produce so much extra in each country that its total return would be

enhanced in spite of reduced prices, assuming all the extra oil could be sold.

The idea that oil companies would purposely plot to drive down the price of what they produce and sell is ludicrous on the face of it. But it is actually no more ludicrous than the dream that a few of the major producers in a market with as many sources of supply as petroleum can shore up the price without doing perhaps irreparable harm to their own future positions in that market.

Such plans recall the many other schemes of the same sort which have been tried and have failed in the past. The 1930's were particularly prolific in such attempts. World War I and the 1920's had witnessed great expansions in productive capacity to feed first the needs of war and then the growing demands of widespread economic growth and inflation. Finally the capacity caught up to the current needs, and prices began to soften.

The schemes that were thought up to hold prices firm were given various grandiose names, such as coffee "valorization," a tin "buffer stock," a wheat quota plan. But their common idea was to impose monopolistic curbs on production, and so push prices up. Depending on the nature of each market, especially the number and variety of potential sources of supply outside the would-be cartel, these schemes took various numbers of years to fail, or at least to prove unable to accomplish the purpose. Some are still in existence in a feeble way, but none was able in the long run to hold prices up.

Not only world schemes but those of single nations failed. A prominent example, of course, is the so-called farm program of the United States which, while perhaps it has succeeded in holding prices higher than they would have been otherwise, has also piled up a monstrous hoard of Government-owned farm commodities.

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The background of the oil scheme is quite similar to that of the plans of the 1930's. The growth in capacity during World War II and the subsequent years has outrun temporarily the world's ability to use oil. And the scheme's chances for success look about as poor as those of the worst of the earlier schemes.

Not only are there three sources of supply of oil outside the control of these five nations in the free world, including a big new field in Libya, but the Communist world seems to be close to having a surplus, or at least a relative surplus, of oil. That is, while the Communist supply would be small per head by United States standards, it seems to be large in relations to the Communist supply of machines that consume oil.

Furthermore, discovery of an enormous new oil field has just been announced in southern Russia, just north of Afghanistan.

Obviously, the moment these five nations force the oil companies that operate there to reduce their sales of petroleum, the Soviets will put more oil on the market. Or the consumers in nations that must import oil will go to Moscow to buy it.

Thus the nations in the cartel will slowly lose their markets while the price remains unsatisfactory as far as they're concerned. Almost inevitably their condition will get worse than if they'd let the market alone. But politics and politicians being what they are, it seems unlikely they'll have the wisdom and forbearance to avoid this disaster.

De la Esfera, periódico venezolano, edición 7 de octubre de 1960, sacamos:

La política del hierro es similar a la del petróleo

Pérez Alfonso Puntualiza su Posición

El Ministro de Minas e Hidrocarburos declaró ayer que no se está hipotecando ninguna de las riquezas minerales del país, y anunció que la política que se sigue con el hierro es similar a la del petróleo.

A continuación la declaración textual emitida ayer por el Ministro:

Venezuela es un país especialmente minero tanto por el petróleo como ahora por el hierro, sin descontar otros minerales aún no explorados suficientemente. Para bien del país, por herencia colonial todas las riquezas mineras del subsuelo son propiedad común del pueblo venezolano que tiene sobre ellas derechos inalienables. Las concesiones para la explotación de hidrocarburos o de minerales otorgan derechos limitados sobre los cuales permanece constantemente la vigencia del dominio eminente del Estado.

Con vista de los principios básicos anteriores cuantos males puedan sobrevenirnos por razón de los abusos y aprovechamientos indebidos de nuestras riquezas mineras, no debemos ser tan incautos para descargarnos en las cuestiones formales, técnicas o jurídicas, de los procedimientos seguidos para la administración de esas riquezas de propiedad común. Se debe tener presente y ver con claridad que la causa cierta es la irresponsabilidad de quienes consecutivamente han ejercido el Poder Público por usurpación de la soberanía nacional que sólo reside en el pueblo y en quienes este mismo pueblo elige para constituir sus representantes autorizados.

Por ello se comprueba cuando ha habido Gobiernos democráticos responsables ante el pueblo como los de los Presidentes Betancourt y Gallegos (1945-1948) y nuevamente ahora el del Presidente Betancourt, la defensa firme y eficiente de los intereses nacionales. Y en materia de hidrocarburos y minerales, bases de la vida económica del país, esa defensa intransigente y constante está a la vista de todos.

1. En lo que se refiere al petróleo, cuando a las concesiones vigentes anteriores a la Ley de 1943 se agregaron los muchos millones de hectáreas entregadas de acuerdo con esa última Ley, el Gobierno democrático declaró y sostuvo por primera vez en 1946 el principio de no otorgar más concesiones petroleras. Este principio desconcertó en esa oportunidad a muchos extremistas de entonces y de ahora, pero en la actualidad no hay ya quien discuta la necesidad y conveniencia de no dar más concesiones petroleras. En materia de impuestos de participación todo el mundo lo sabe, aquí y en otras partes, como Venezuela adelantó hasta lograr una participación justa dentro de las circunstancias que prevalecían para aquel momento.

2. Pero en materia de hierro el Gobierno democrático no fue menos cuidadoso en la defensa nacionalista de esta riqueza de los venezolanos. Su posición es tan clara que sólo los obsesionados por los esquemas mentales extranjerizantes que ven en Venezuela un peón de las luchas internacionales, pueden aspirar confundir a los venezolanos en esta materia. Sólo es tan habituados a falsear las realidades con finalidades específicas o a descuidar la verificación de los hechos por lo que les interesa es el impacto verbalista de las expresiones, pueden haber pretendido confundir las concesiones de hierro obtenidas por alguna empresa minera por mandato e imposición de una Ley aprobada durante el Gobierno del Presidente Medina y quienes lo apoyaban en su gestión. Entre estos últimos hay muchos de los que afirman que las minas que explota la Orinoco Mining Company, entre ellas el Cerro Bolívar, fueron concedidas por el Gobierno democrático. Estas concesiones fueron denunciadas de acuerdo con la Ley aprobada el 15 de julio de 1944 y de su Reglamento autorizado el 28 de diciembre de aquel año, instrumentos legales que aún están vigentes. La región de las minas explotadas no había sido declarada reserva nacional e introducido el denuncia por cualquier

interesado la Ley le acuerda un derecho que no puede invalidarse sino en los casos previstos y determinados por la misma Ley.

3. Las únicas concesiones de mineral de hierro concedidas por el Gobierno democrático en 1946 fueron las de Piacoa a orillas del Orinoco, al Este del Caroni. El mineral, de estas concesiones de bajo tenor reclamada procesamiento especiales que interesaba ver si podían desarrollarse. Además, para entonces sólo estaban en proceso de explotación las minas de El Paco, de reservas limitadas y el interés nacional exigía determinar prontamente otras posibilidades de mineral de hierro con vista a su procesamiento en Venezuela. Que estas concesiones acordadas en 1946, respondían al interés de todos los venezolanos quedó manifiesto en las discusiones de la Memoria del Ministro de Fomento (incluía Minas para la época) en el Congreso Nacional elegido libremente por los venezolanos, cuando representantes de todas las agrupaciones políticas distintas de Acción Democrática atacaron cuanto pudieron las gestiones del Gobierno sin referirse entonces a las concesiones que se informaron haberse concedido.

Cómo era de importante en aquella época haberse podido llegar a una explotación económica del mineral pobre de Piacoa lo demuestra el hecho de la renuncia que ahora ha hecho la concesionaria, después de 14 años de haberlas mantenido bajo su control. Con esta renuncia de las minas de Piacoa, termina el incidente de las únicas concesiones de hierro acordadas por el Gobierno democrático en 1946. La renuncia es la consecuencia también de una política actual de vigilancia de las concesiones vigentes para que no se mantengan indebidamente por los particulares como reservas futuras. De no haberse producido la renuncia de estas concesiones, estaba prevista la declaración de su caducidad para el mes de Diciembre, cuando se venía la prórroga del plazo que se había acordado a la concesionaria.

4. Pero la política del hierro actual, de acuerdo con las nuevas circunstancias y el interés nacional, después de haberse descubierto las grandes reservas de hierro al Oeste del Caroni, es similar a la del petróleo en cuanto ya no interesa más que los particulares exploren o desarrollen minerales de hierro. También para el hierro se ha declarado como política oficial no dar más concesiones. Y no solamente no dar más concesiones sino cuidar de que aquellas que estén vigentes

y no cumplan estrictamente con las previsiones legales se rescaten de los particulares que han descuidado sus derechos.

Es así que el Gobierno declaró la caducidad de las minas María Luisa con reservas estimadas de 150 millones de toneladas y en las que tenían interés la Hanna Ore Co. y la Republic Steel. La causa de la caducidad fue el no haber puesto en explotación las minas dentro del término previsto por la Ley. Sobre este asunto han intentado demanda contra la Nación los interesados, que seguramente no prosperará.

5. Pero la política del hierro y la decisión de explotarlo y reducirlo en Venezuela conlleva a una política consecuente respecto a otros minerales como el níquel y el manganeso que interesan en la producción de acero. Por ello tampoco se darán concesiones sobre estos minerales y las vigentes serán vigiladas al igual que las del hierro. En razón de esta estrecha vigilancia se ha declarado ya la caducidad de las minas Camedas y San Onofre, en las que tenía interés la Internacional Níquel y en las cuales se realizaba una explotación ficticia o simulada a los fines de mantener latentes los derechos sobre la misma. También en este caso los interesados han anunciado que defenderán sus derechos ante los Tribunales, pero igualmente tenemos confianza en que la justicia está de parte de la Nación.

Similar es el caso de las minas de manganeso Sakuntalá, Urania y otras en el Distrito Piar del Estado Bolívar también declaradas caducas.

6. La bauxita es otro mineral para el cual se ha declarado la política oficial de no dar concesiones. En este caso la razón no consiste en que se tengan comprobadas reservas, sino en el hecho de gran potencial hidroeléctrico que habrá de desarrollar el país en sus poderosos ríos. Con base en este factor económico el Estado se reserva toda posible explotación de bauxita, pues no se cree conveniente concederla a particulares.

7. Por último, de estrecha relación con el potencial hidroeléctrico, reserva nacional, y con el potencial de hidrocarburos, también reserva nacional, se mantendrá en poder del Estado y no se darán concesiones del potencial geotérmico que ya se ha comprobado en la región de El Pilar en el Estado Sucre. En este caso también hay pendiente un reclamo de una empresa que pretende derechos de concesionaria sobre la energía descubierta.

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